
Teaching Philosophy

My broad teaching goal is to foster a deep understanding of course content so that students leave the classroom with knowledge that they can confidently and successfully apply to their own lives. Over five years of teaching undergraduates at Simon Fraser University, and the past year of teaching MBA students at Kellogg School of Management, I have developed the two core philosophies of **Learning by Doing** and **Inclusive Teaching** in service of this goal.

Learning by Doing. All too often, in learning a new skill or concept, students simply want to learn “how” without learning “why.” Admittedly, it is a lot easier to learn that a high opening offer can lead to better negotiated outcomes than *when and why* ambitious aspirations are effective. One of my main goals in teaching is to foster a desire to learn how to apply course concepts while simultaneously unravelling how they work. When teaching Negotiations Fundamentals at the Kellogg School of Management, I accomplish this by providing students with the opportunity to experience course phenomena for themselves. Then, with the class, I take a Socratic approach by soliciting insights about these phenomena through discussion. Finally, I conclude with a lecture to formally expound on the phenomenon the students are now intimately, and sometimes frustratingly, familiar with.

This teaching strategy means that I spend a large portion of each class engaging in open dialogue wherein I lead students to intuit phenomena such as naïve realism or anchoring effects prior to any formal introduction to the ideas. With such a deliberate stacking of experience, discussion, and formal instruction, students are far less burdened by the anxiety of simply “getting” a new skill or concept and instead develop a sense of accomplishment and appreciation for what they can do with their newfound knowledge.

This approach has been successful in ensuring students feel confident taking my lessons into their daily lives. Two representative comments highlighting this came from students who, when reflecting on their experiences in my class, stated “*Dylan did a great job in providing context to the negotiations, and in allowing us to ‘practice’ the concepts before learning them in class. I remembered key aspects of negotiation frameworks and was able to apply them naturally as we did more negotiations before class,*” “*I work in technology and ... I’ve been applying class learnings and recently secured a 50% discount on the last contract I worked on!*” and “*I am now able to put concepts [from class] to conversation in real time ... I actually used the MESOs tactic with my wife to decide on our weekend plans ... she appreciated the learning that I took from the class, too.*” These comments reflect a broad overall trend in student’s post-course reflections.

Inclusive Teaching. I believe one of the best ways to ensure that everyone is getting the most out of a given class is by fostering an interactive and collegial classroom environment that is warm, inclusive, and free of judgment. Often one substantial barrier to learning is a fear of appearing vulnerable in front of one’s peers—especially in a class such as negotiations where publicly sharing self-critical reflection is key to learning. I take special care at the beginning of, and then periodically throughout, each course to note that most questions are likely to be shared by many others in the class.

While I strive to keep my lessons a mix of dialogue and lecture, some students still may not feel comfortable speaking up in class. To ensure that these students understand course content and feel that they are welcome in my classroom environment, I often solicit “lecture comprehension checks” at the end of class whereby I give students the opportunity to submit anonymous questions or request

clarification. At the beginning of the next class, I allot a small amount of time to addressing common questions or confusions.

Creating a warm and inclusive teaching environment encourages students to more effectively engage with myself, the material, and each other. This focus on inclusion clearly comes across to my students, who have given me written feedback such as *“Very friendly and personable. Made the tutorial feel like a very friendly group,”* and *““Dylan’s been great! Creates a comfortable (& fun) learning environment.”*

In sum, my teaching philosophy is broadly aimed at accomplishing the goal of ensuring students actively want to, and are capable of, taking my lessons into their work and personal lives. It is important to me that students leave my classroom with the tools necessary to make meaningful improvements not only in their own lives, but the lives of those around them as well. To this end, I actively work to foster a collegial, inclusive, and diverse classroom environment. I look forward to continuing to apply and develop this philosophy in the classroom for many years to come.

Teaching Experience and Accolades

Despite having external federal funding throughout my graduate work at Simon Fraser University, I served as a teaching assistant (TA) in fourteen out of sixteen semesters. As a TA, I primarily led two-hour seminars each week on topics such as Data Analysis in Psychology and Research Methods in Psychology. Additionally, I taught Introduction to Social Psychology to 175 undergraduates in the Winter 2019 term. My average teaching ability rating over this time was 3.6/4, with a full two-thirds (67%) of my students rating me the highest rating of 4 out of 4. For these accomplishments I was **twice awarded the Council of Canadian Psychology Departments Certificate of Teaching Excellence**. Student satisfaction is exemplified in written feedback such as *“Dylan is a great instructor. His lectures are easy to follow, interesting, and engaging. I loved the use of demonstrations, videos, example studies, and lecturing in combination,”* *“Very interesting, well informed lectures. Dylan was very kind and always open to questions. Overall, amazing prof!,”* and *“Dylan did a great job preparing us for negotiations as well as analyzing outcomes and debriefing. I thought Dylan was an awesome professor.”*

My passion for teaching has only strengthened since arriving at Kellogg. I have twice sought out the opportunity to TA Negotiations Fundamentals to full-time MBA students with Professor Nour Kteily. I have also taught three sections of Negotiations Fundamentals to evening and weekend MBA students (Median rating 5/6, “Very Satisfied”). Moreover, I have had several students reach out to me personally to express their gratitude. For example, one student emailed me upon completing the final exam and wrote *“I wanted to personally thank you and [TA] for an amazing class this quarter. I actually came into this class feeling very unsure of my raw negotiation skills ... After taking your class, I honestly can say that I feel much more confident in using the negotiation and preparation skills I learned for any situation (work, personal, life in general) to really get the best outcome instead of hesitating or shying away from potential negotiation situations (as I’ve felt myself doing before).”*

Receiving emails such as these has reaffirmed my passion for teaching and commitment to becoming an even more effective instructor. Based on my background and experiences thus far, I have interest in continuing to teach Negotiations Behavior, Organizational Behavior, People in Organizations, and Advanced topics in Negotiations at the graduate, executive, or doctoral level. Additionally, I look forward to training and supervising PhD students to help develop the next generation of research scholars and business leaders.